

a little hard to expect them to give advice
for love; but
nothing will content this idealist, short of the
extinction
of the whole profession:

Kynde love shal come yit • and conscience
togideres,
And make of law a laborere • suche love shal
arise.

Doctors, again, are largely 'morthererers'—
lorde hem
amende!⁵ Merchants and tradesmen build tall
houses out
of the proceeds of those dark shops where
they cheat their
customers. Even the poor do not escape this
Cato's lash.
They have used the scarcity of labour since
the Black
Death to force up wages, and he talks of
their effrontery
in demanding meat fresh and hot, in place of
bacon and
halfpenny ale, with the same tone of
righteous indigna-
tion as old ladies used during the war about
munition-
workers daring to buy furs and pianos.

It is, in fact, a grey, wicked world. The
voice of blame
grows a little monotonous; but a mediaeval
writer has
always an Old Guard in reserve, to rally the
wavering
ranks of weary readers—the Seven Deadly
Sins. They are
such eternally vital creatures—far more so
than the Vir-
tues. And few people are guilty of all seven
(though the
youthful Swinburne did once enliven a party
by declaring
it his ambition to have seven towers in
which to enact
one of them on each day of the week), so
that the sinful
reader, who is feeling depressed by the faults
he has, can
console himself with the spectacle of those

he has not.
Two centuries later in Marlowe, when Lucifer
and Beel-
zebub come hot from Hell to entertain Dr.
Faustus, their
first idea is still this ancient recipe. 'We will
highly
gratify thee', say they. And Faustus is indeed
excessively
gratified:

That sight will be as pleasing unto me,
As Paradise was to Adam, the first day
Of his creation.